

VISIT...

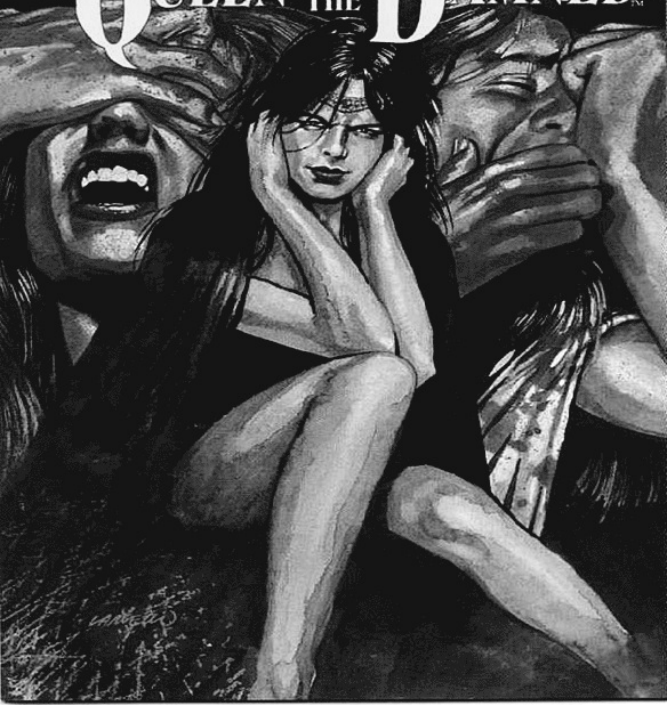
LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

INNOVATION 11

\$2nd U.S. / \$3rd Can.

PART 11 OF 12

Anne Rice's
THE QUEEN OF THE DAMNED™





THE FOLLOWING NIGHT
THE SOLDIERS CAME FOR US,
INTO THE GREAT OPEN COURT
OF THE PALACE WE WERE BROUGHT,
AS WE HAD BEEN BEFORE.

"IN A QUAVERING
VOICE, AKASHA TOLD HER
SUBJECTS THAT WE WERE
MONSTROUS WITCHES...

"... AND THE GREAT GOD
OSIRIS COULD NOT LOOK
KINDLY UPON THE WITCHES
WHO HAD SO TROUBLED HIS
BELOVED PEOPLE.

"AND HE DEMANDED
NOW THAT NO MERCY
BE SHOWN.



HEKARE, FOR YOUR
EVIL LIFE AND YOUR
DISCOURSE WITH
DEMONS, YOUR TONGUE
SHALL BE TAKEN FROM
YOUR MOUTH.



AND MARGARET, FOR
THE EVIL WHICH YOU
HAVE FAVORED
AND SOUGHT TO MAKE
US BELIEVE IN--



AND THEN,
AT HIGH NOON
TOMORROW IN THE
PUBLIC PLACE
BEFORE THE
PALACE...

YOU BOTH SHALL
BE BURNED ALIVE
FOR ALL THE
PEOPLE TO SEE.



--YOUR
EYES SHALL BE
PLUCKED OUT!



FOR BEHOLD, NO
SUCH EVIL SHALL EVER
PREVAIL AGAINST THE GODS
OF EGYPT AND THEIR CHOSEN
KING AND QUEEN.



FOR THE GODS
HAVE LOOKED UPON US
WITH BENEVOLENCE AND
SPECIAL FAVOR, AND WE ARE
AS THE KING AND QUEEN
OF HEAVEN...

...AND OUR
DESTINY IS FOR THE
COMMON GOOD!



LET THE SPIRITS
WITNESS, FOR THEIRS
IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE
FUTURE--BOTH WHAT IT WOULD
BE, AND WHAT I WILL!

YOU ARE THE
QUEEN OF THE PAINFUL,
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE; YOUR
ONLY DESTINY IS EVIL, AS
WELL YOU KNOW!

BUT I SHALL
STOP YOU, IF I
MUST COME BACK FROM
THE DEAD TO DO IT. AT THE
HOUR OF YOUR GREATEST
MENACE, IT IS I WHO
WILL DEFEAT YOU!

LOOK WELL UPON
MY FACE, FOR YOU
WILL SEE ME
AGAIN!

based on the novel by anne rice
adapted and edited by faye perench
illustrated by o.j. carriello
lettered by don martinez
cover illustration by o.j. carriello

THE TWINS



"IN COLD HORROR I
WATCHED IT HAPPEN..."



"...I HEARD HER GASP
AS IT WAS DONE."



"THEN THE
SOLDIERS LAID
HOLD OF ME."



"THE SOLDIERS CLAMPED THEIR
HANDS ON MY HEAD AND PUSHED BACK
MY EYELIDS AND TORE ALL VISION FROM ME
AS I WEPT WITHOUT A SOUND."

"THEN SUDDENLY, I FELT
A WARM HAND LAY HOLD
OF ME, AND I FELT SOMETHING
AGAINST MY LIPS."

"KHAYMAN HAD MY EYES. HE WAS
PRESSING THEM TO MY LIPS. AT ONCE
I SWALLOWED THEM, LEST THEY BE
DESECRATED OR LOST."

"THE WIND GREW FIERCER,
AND I HEARD THE COURTIERS
RUNNING IN ALL DIRECTIONS, SOME
COUGHING, OTHERS GASPING, MANY
CRYING AS THEY FLED."

"I TURNED, GROPING FOR
MEKARE, AND FELT HER HEAD
COME DOWN ON MY SHOULDER, HER
HAIR AGAINST MY CHEEK."



BURN
THEM
NOW!

NO, IT
IS TOO
SOON.



LET THEM
SUFFER!

"WE WERE TAKEN AWAY AND
LEFT ALONE ON THE FLOOR OF
THE LITTLE CELL.

"THESE ARE THE
LAST HOURS OF MY
LIFE, I THOUGHT.

"AND WILL HER SUFFERING BE
MORE THAN MINE IN THE MORNING?
FOR SHE SHALL SEE ME BURN...

"WHEREAS I
CANNOT SEE HER,
AND SHE CANNOT
EVEN CRY OUT.

"AND SO THE
MINUTES PASSED.

"FINALLY--IT MUST HAVE
BEEN THREE HOURS BEFORE
MORNING--I HEARD NOISES
OUTSIDE THE CELL.

"SOMETHING VIOLENT--THE
GUARD GIVING A SHARP CRY
AND THEN FALLING. THE MAN
HAD BEEN SLAIN.

"AND THEN
KHAYMAN CAME
INTO THE CELL."



"BUT INSTANTLY I THOUGHT,
THIS IS NOT KHAYMAN!
AND THEN I UNDERSTOOD."

THEY HAVE
DONE IT TO YOU!
THEY HAVE WORKED
IT ON YOU!



LISTEN TO ME, WITCHES.
DO YOU WANT TO DIE TOMORROW
IN FIRE AND SMOKE BEFORE AN
IGNORANT POPULACE--

--OR WOULD
YOU FIGHT THIS
EVIL THING?"



WOULD YOU BE ITS
EQUAL AND ITS ENEMY
UPON THIS EARTH?

FOR WHY HAVE THE
POWER OF MIGHTY MEN SAVE
THAT OF OTHERS OF THE
SAME STRENGTH?



OH, KHAYMAN,
SUCH TREACHERY
FROM THOSE YOU'VE
SERVED SO WELL.



YES, THEY
HAVE DONE IT!
THEY HAVE PUT THIS
EVIL INTO ME!



WITCHES, IF THEY
COULD DO THIS TO ME, CAN
I NOT DO IT TO YOU?"

MAHARET, WHO CAN
BEAT THEM, SAVE ONES
AS POWERFUL AS
THEMSELVES?

NO, I
WOULD DIE
FIRST.

AND YOU, MEKARE? WILL YOU
REACH NOW FOR THE FULFILLMENT
OF YOUR OWN CURSE?

OR, DIE AND
LEAVE IT TO THE
SPIRITS WHO HAVE
FAILED YOU FROM
THE START?

"SOMEWHERE IN THE BLACKNESS, THE
SPIRITS WEEP. THE SPIRITS KNEW THE
FINAL OUTCOME BEFORE I DID.

"MEKARE HAD MADE
HER CHOICE.

"THEN THE WINDS DIED AWAY,
A HUSH FELL IN THE BLACKNESS,
AND THE PALACE WAS STILL."

"I MADE
NO DECISION,
REALLY..."



"...I KNEW ONLY
THAT ALL OUR
LIVES WE HAD
BEEN THE SAME,
TWO BODIES AND
ONE SOUL."



"AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, SHE WAS
CHANGED, AND WE WERE NOT THE SAME
BEING, AND YET WE WERE."

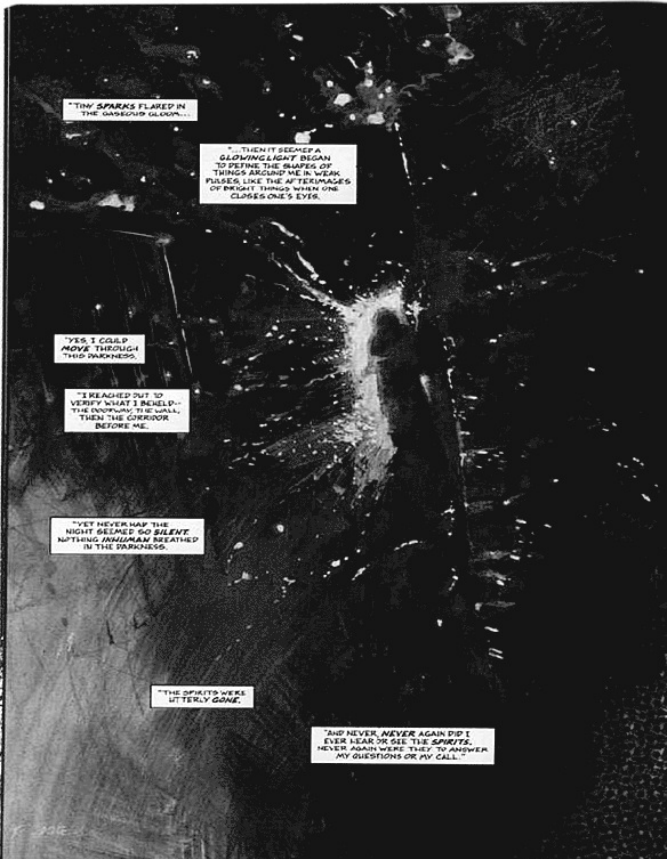


"KHAYMAN FED ME THE
MAGIC, THEN MY SISTER,
THEN KHAYMAN AGAIN."



"YOU KNOW
WHAT BEFELL ME,
DON'T YOU?"

"BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE
DARK GIFT IS FOR THOSE
WHO ARE BLIND?"



"TINY SPARKS FLARED IN
THE DARKENED GLIMMER."

"...THEN IT SEEMED A
GLOWING LIGHT BEGAN
TO DEFINE THE SHAPES OF
THINGS AROUND ME IN WEAK
PULSES, LIKE THE AFTERIMAGES
OF BRIGHT THINGS WHEN ONE
CLOSES ONE'S EYES."

"YES, I COULD
MOVE THROUGH
THIS DARKNESS."

"I REACHED OUT TO
VERIFY WHAT I BEHELD--
THE ENDPOINT, THE WALL,
THEN THE CORRIDOR
BEFORE ME."

"YET NEVER HAD THE
NIGHT SEEMED SO SILENT.
NOTHING INHUMAN BREATHED
IN THE DARKNESS."

"THE SPIRITS WERE
UTTERLY GONE."

"AND NEVER, NEVER AGAIN DID I
EVER HEAR OR SEE THE SPIRITS.
NEVER AGAIN WERE THEY TO ANSWER
MY QUESTIONS OR MY CALL."

LONG BEFORE THE SUNRISE,
WE WERE HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN
A TOMB. I HAD BY THEN DRUNK MY FIRST
DRAUGHT OF MORTAL BLOOD.

BUT I HAD NOT DARED TO
STEAL THE EYES OF MY VICTIM
—I HAD NOT EVEN THOUGHT SUCH
A THING MIGHT WORK.

IT WAS FIVE NIGHTS LATER
THAT I MADE SUCH A DISCOVERY AND
SAW AS A **BLOODDRINKER** TRULY
SEES FOR THE FIRST TIME.



BUT NOT A
FORTNIGHT AFTER
WE HAD FLED THE ROYAL
PALACE, WE WERE CAUGHT
BY THE MOBS OUTSIDE
THE GATES OF
SAGGARA.



TO ANY WHO
WANTED THE POWER
HE GAVE IT!

THAT THE KING
AND THE QUEEN
SHOULD HAVE
WORTHY
ENEMIES, THAT
WAS KHAYMAN'S
VOW.

BY THEN WE
HAD FLED THE
ROYAL CITY,
MOVING NORTH
ALL NIGHT.

ON THE
RAGE KHAYMAN
FELT IN THOSE
EARLY NIGHTS!



"KHAYMAN MANAGED TO FIGHT HIS WAY TO FREEDOM. BUT MEKARE AND I WERE SURROUNDED, AS YOU HAVE SEEN IN YOUR DREAMS.



"MY EYES WERE TORN FROM ME AGAIN, AND WE FEARED THE FIRE NOW, FOR SURELY THAT COULD DESTROY US.



"BUT THE KING AND QUEEN FEARED TO DESTROY OUR BODIES.

"THEY FEARED THAT WHATEVER PAIN WE MIGHT FEEL WOULD THEN BE FELT BY THEM.



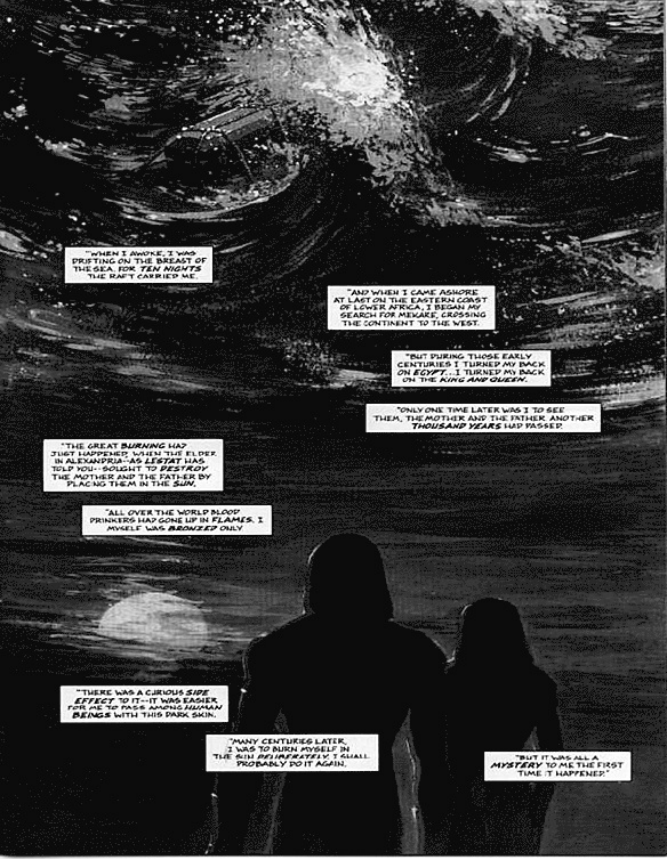
"AND SO INTO THE STONE COFFINS WE WERE PUT, AS YOU KNOW ONE TO BE TAKEN TO THE EAST AND ONE TO THE WEST.

"OF COURSE THIS WAS NOT SO, BUT WHO COULD KNOW IT THEN?



"THE RAFTS HAD BEEN MADE TO GET US ADRIFT IN THE GREAT OCEANS. I HAD SEEN THEM EVEN IN MY BLINDNESS."





"WHEN I AWOK, I WAS
DRIFTING ON THE BREAST OF
THE SEA. FOR TEN NIGHTS
THE RAFT CARRIED ME.

"AND WHEN I CAME ASHORE
AT LAST ON THE EASTERN COAST
OF LOWER AFRICA, I BEGAN MY
SEARCH FOR MEXAKE, CROSSING
THE CONTINENT TO THE WEST.

"BUT DURING THOSE EARLY
CENTURIES I TURNED MY BACK
ON EGYPT... I TURNED MY BACK
ON THE KING AND QUEEN.

"ONLY ONE TIME LATER WAS I TO SEE
THEM, THE MOTHER AND THE FATHER. ANOTHER
THOUSAND YEARS HAD PASSED.

"THE GREAT BURNING HAD
JUST HAPPENED. WHEN THE ELDER
IN ALEXANDRIA—AS LISTAT WAS
TOLD YOU—BOUGHT TO DESTROY
THE MOTHER AND THE FATHER BY
PLACING THEM IN THE SUN.

"ALL OVER THE WORLD BLOOD
DRINKERS HAD GONE UP IN FLAMES. I
MYSELF WAS BROWNED ONLY.

"THERE WAS A CURIOUS SIDE
EFFECT TO IT—IT WAS EASIER
FOR ME TO PASS AMONG HUMAN
BEINGS WITH THIS DARK SKIN.

"MANY CENTURIES LATER,
I WAS TO BURN MYSELF IN
THE SUN PRESUMPTUOUSLY. I SHALL
PROBABLY DO IT AGAIN.

"BUT IT WAS ALL A
MYSTERY TO ME THE FIRST
TIME IT HAPPENED."

"IT WAS THEN I HEARD TELL OF
MARIUS WHO HAD TAKEN THE MOTHER
AND FATHER TO WHERE NO ONE COULD
EVER BURN THEM--OR US--AGAIN.

"IT WAS NOT DIFFICULT TO FIND
MARIUS. I DISCOVERED HIS HOUSE AND
WAITED FOR MY MOMENT...

"...FOR THE MOMENT WHEN
MARIUS AND PANDORA WOULD
GO OUT TO HUNT.

"AND THEN I ENTERED THE
HOUSE, MAKING THE LOCKS
GIVE WAY FROM THE INSIDE.

"I SAW THE MOTHER AND FATHER,
DARKENED AS I HAD BEEN DARKENED,
YET BEAUTIFUL AND LIFELESS.

"I WENT TO THEM. I
TOUCHED THEM. I STRUCK
THEM. THEY DID NOT MOVE.



"THEN I MADE
MY TEST."



"I PIERCED THE IMMORTAL BODY WHICH HAD BECOME BOTH IMPERFECTIBLE AND DECEPTIVELY FRAGILE--

--AND MY BLADE WENT RIGHT THROUGH HER HEART.



"FOR A MOMENT THE HEART CEASED TO BEAT. THEN THE EGYPTIANS BEGAN TO HEAL.



"BUT MOST SIGNIFICANT-- I HAD FELT THAT MOMENT WHEN THE HEART FAILED TO PUMP THE BLOOD...

"...I HAD FELT THE DIZZINESS, THE VAGUE DISCONNECTION, THE VERY WHISPER OF DEATH.

"NO DOUBT, ALL THROUGH THE WORLD BLOOD DRINKERS HAD FELT IT.



"THE CORE OF AMEL WAS STILL WITHIN HER. THE LIFE OF THE BLOOD DRINKERS RESIDED WITHIN HER BODY AS IT ALWAYS WOULD."



BUT YOU DID NOT WIN, FINALLY. FOR MY CHILD, MURAM, SURVIVED TO CARRY THE BLOOD OF MY FAMILY FORWARD IN TIME.

AND THIS, WHICH MAY MEAN NOTHING TO YOU, AS YOU SIT THERE IN SILENCE, MEANS ALL THINGS TO ME.

"AKASHA DID HAVE ONE
VICTORY--MEKARE AND I WERE
NEVER UNITED AGAIN.

"THROUGH ALL THE LANDS OF THE
WORLD I WANDERED, SEARCHING FOR
MEKARE. BUT SHE WAS GONE FROM ME.

"YET I KNEW, I KNEW THAT
SHE WAS ALIVE. AND I KNOW
THAT SHE IS ALIVE STILL.
AND NOW THE TIME HAS COME
TO FULFILL THE OLD CURSE.

"I KNOW THAT SHE MOVES
NORTHWARD. BUT IT IS NOT
ME SHE SEEKS. IT IS THE
MOTHER. MEKARE WILL END
THE MOTHER. I KNOW IT.

"AND EITHER MEKARE WILL
PERISH, OR THE MOTHER WILL
PERISH. AND WITH THE MOTHER
SO SHALL ALL OF US."





MEKARE MAY BRING
ABOUT THE FULFILLMENT,
AND IT MAY BE THE
BETTER THING
FOR US ALL.

HEARKEN TO
EVERYTHING THAT I'VE
TOLD YOU OF THE MOTHER
TO WHAT I'VE SAID
OF HER SOUL...

...AND OF THE NATURE
OF THE DEMON THAT
RESIDES IN HER...IT'S CORE
WEDDED TO HER CORE.

BUT LET ME LAY
BEFORE YOU NOW THE
FINAL CHAPTER OF
MY TALE.



"AS I'VE ALREADY SAID, AKASHA DID NOT ANNIHILATE MY PEOPLE. THEY LIVED ON IN MY DAUGHTER MIRIAM...



"...AND IN HER DAUGHTERS, AND THOSE DAUGHTERS BORN TO THEM.



"I CREATED THE FICTION OF A BRANCH OF THE FAMILY WHICH KEPT ALL ITS RECORDS.



"AND IN EACH GENERATION OF THIS FICTIONAL BRANCH, THERE WAS A FICTIONAL WOMAN TO WHOM THE TASK OF RECORD-KEEPING WAS PASSED.



"THE NAME OF MAHARET CAME WITH THE HONOR...



"...AND WHEN TIME DEMANDED IT, OLD MAHARET WOULD DIE, AND YOUNG MAHARET WOULD INHERIT THE TASK.



"AND SO I MYSELF WAS WITHIN THE FAMILY, AND THE FAMILY KNEW ME, AND I KNEW THE FAMILY'S LOVE.



"AS THE CENTURIES PASSED, I BECAME THE WRITER OF LETTERS, THE DENECTOR, THE UNIFIER."





I NEVER WENT
DOWN INTO THE EARTH
AS MANY OF YOU
HAVE DONE.

I NEVER FACED
MADNESS AND LOSS
OF MEMORY AS WAS COMMON
AMONG THE OLPONES.



BUT IT WAS
NOT THAT MADNESS
DIDN'T THREATEN.
IT WAS NOT THAT
WEARINESS DID
NOT SOMETIMES
OVERWHELM.



IT WAS THAT I HAD
THE RECORDS OF MY FAMILY
TO SAFEGUARD. I TURNED TO
THE FAMILY AS IF IT WERE
THE VERY SPRING OF
LIFE ITSELF.



MY TEACHER, MY
BOOK OF LIFE.
THE FAMILY WAS
ALL THINGS.



NOW I WANT YOU TO
COME WITH ME. I WANT TO
SHOW YOU WHAT THIS
FAMILY HAS BECOME.



THE GREAT
FAMILY.



YES, THESE ARE
MY DESCENDANTS,
TRACED THROUGH
THE MATERNAL LINE
FOR SIX THOUSAND
YEARS.



UNIMAGINABLE!

IT IS BUT ONE
HUMAN FAMILY. YET
THERE IS NO NATION
ON EARTH THAT DOES NOT
CONTAIN SOME PART
OF IT.



NO PEOPLE, NO RACE,
NO COUNTRY DOES NOT
CONTAIN SOME OF THE
GREAT FAMILY. IN SUM,
THE GREAT FAMILY IS
THE HUMAN FAMILY.

YES.



ONE
FAMILY AND
ALL
FAMILIES...



THAT IS
WHAT IS
THREATENED
NOW.



DON'T BE AFRAID.
MEKARE WILL COME.
MEKARE WILL FULFILL
THE CURSE.

AND THE
GREAT FAMILY
WILL GO ON.



THERE HAS TO BE
A WAY TO KILL THE
MOTHER WITHOUT
KILLING US.

WE HAVE TO THINK
ON THIS, TO BE READY,
TO HAVE SOME SORT
OF PLAN.



YOU CANNOT
CHANGE THE
PROPHECY.

KUAYMAN, IF
WE HAVE LEARNED
ANYTHING, IT IS
THAT THERE IS
NO DESTINY.

AND IF THERE
IS NO DESTINY,
THEN THERE IS
NO PROPHECY.



AH, BUT PROPHECIES
HAVE A WAY OF
FULFILLING THEM-
SELVES. THAT'S THE
MAGIC OF IT.



WE CAN USE
REASON. THIS
CREATURE *SPEAKS*
NOW, DOES SHE NOT?
SHE *UNDERSTANDS*
WHAT IS SPOKEN
TO HER.

PERHAPS
SHE CAN BE
DIVERTED...



OH, YOU ARE MAD,
TRULY MAD! YOU ARE
GOING TO SPEAK TO THIS
MONSTER THAT ROAMED THE
WORLD INCINERATING
HER OFFSPRING?

WHAT DOES
THIS THING KNOW
OF REASON? THIS
THING ONLY KNOWS
SLAUGHTER AND DEATH
AND VIOLENCE
AND--







FRIGHTENED.

FRIGHTENED FOR THEM AND FOR
ME, AND, STRANGELY, FOR HER.

FOR HER, THE ONE WHO
MIGHT DESTROY ALL THAT
I HAD EVER LOVED.

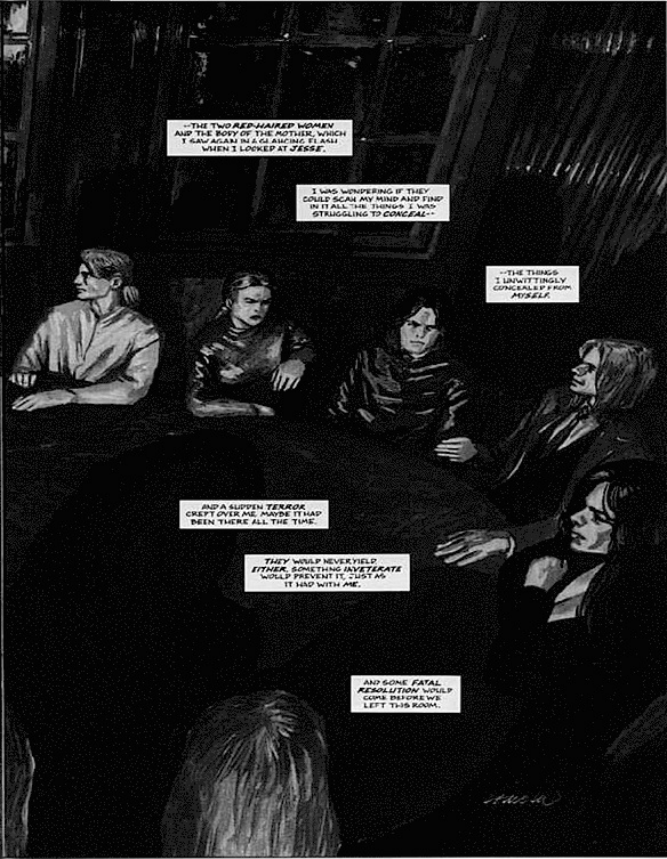
I LOOKED AT LOUIS,
MY SEEMINGLY FRAGILE
LOUIS WITH HIS SEEMINGLY
INVINCIBLE COMPOSURE...

...AND AT ARMAND, THE URGHIN
WITH THE ANGEL'S FACE.

FINALLY THOSE
YOU LOVE ARE SIMPLY...
THOSE YOU LOVE.

ALL THEIR VINTS
WERE VISIBLE. COULD
THEY KEEP THEIR
SECRETS FROM HER?

NO TIME TO UNDERSTAND
THEM ALL, TO EVALUATE THE
LINKS WHICH CONNECTED THEM,
TO ASK THE MEANING OF THAT
STRANGE IMAGE--



--THE TWO RED-HAIRED WOMEN
AND THE BODY OF THE MOTHER, WHICH
I SAW AGAIN IN A GLANCING FLASH
WHEN I LOOKED AT JESSE.

I WAS WONDERING IF THEY
COULD SCAN MY MIND AND TIND
IN IT ALL THE THINGS I WAS
STRUGGLING TO CONCEAL--

--THE THINGS
I UNWITTINGLY
CONCEALED FROM
MYSELF.

AND A SUDDEN TERROR
CREPT OVER ME. MAYBE IT HAD
BEEN THERE ALL THE TIME.

THEY WOULD NEVER YIELD
EITHER. SOMETHING INVETERATE
WOULD PREVENT IT, JUST AS
IT HAD WITH ME.

AND SOME FATAL
RESOLUTION WOULD
COME BEFORE WE
LEFT THIS ROOM.

Stuck



DO NOT BE
AFRAID, MY PRINCE,
WHAT YOU FEEL IN THIS
ROOM IS DEATH--

--BUT IT IS THE
DEATH OF BELIEFS
AND STRUCTURES.
NOTHING MORE.



THE DEATH OF
PRECIOUS PERUWA,
WHICH SHOULD HAVE
DIED A LONG
TIME AGO.



IS THERE
NOTHING THAT
CAN PERSUADE YOU
TO STOP? WHAT
CAN WE SAY?

WE WANT YOU
TO CEASE THE
AFFLICTIONS. WE
WANT YOU NOT TO
INTERVENE.



WHY? BECAUSE IT
SO UPSETS YOUR *PRECIOUS*
WHELP? MARIUS, YOUR STUDENT
HERE HAS GIVEN ME THOSE
OLD ARGUMENTS.

BUT MORE
SIGNIFICANTLY,
I HAVE GIVEN THEM
A THOUSAND TIMES
TO MYSELF.



HOW LONG DO YOU
THINK I HAVE LISTENED
TO THE PRAYERS OF THE
WORLD, PONDERING A WAY TO
TERMINATE THE ENDLESS
CYCLE OF HUMAN
VIOLENCE?

IT IS TIME
NOW FOR YOU
TO LISTEN TO
WHAT I HAVE
TO SAY.



ARE WE TO PLAY A ROLE
IN THIS? OR WILL WE BE
DESTROYED AS THE OTHERS
HAVE BEEN DESTROYED?

YOU WILL BE MY
ANGELS, MY GODS. IF
YOU DO NOT CHOOSE TO
FOLLOW ME, I'LL
DESTROY YOU.



AS FOR THE OLD
ONES, THE OLD ONES WHOM
I CANNOT SO EASILY
DISPATCH--

--IF THEY TURN AGAINST
ME, THEY SHALL BE AS DEVILS
OPPOSING ME, AND ALL HUMANITY
SHALL SENT THEM DOWN.



...AND THEY SHALL
THROUGH THEIR OPPOSITION
SERVE THE SCHEME
QUITE WELL.



HOW IS IT
POSSIBLE TO BREAK
A CYCLE OF VIOLENCE
THROUGH MORE WANTON
VIOLENCE?

YOU ARE DESTROYING THE
MALES OF THE HUMAN SPECIES.
WHAT CAN POSSIBLY BE THE OUTCOME
OF SUCH A BRUTAL ACT?

YOU KNOW THE OUTCOME
AS WELL AS I DO. ALL THOSE
CENTURIES I SAT UPON MY
THRONE IN MARRIA'S GARDEN. I
DREAMED OF AN EARTH THAT
WAS A GARDEN--

--A WORLD WHERE
BEINGS LIVED WITHOUT
THE TORTURE THAT I
COULD HEAR AND FEEL.



AND THEN THE UTTER
SIMPLICITY OF IT STRUCK
ME. THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO
CAN REALIZE SUCH A
DREAM ARE WOMEN--

--BUT ONLY IF ALL
THE MEN--OR VERY
NEARLY ALL THE MEN--
ARE REMOVED.





ALL FORMS OF
RANDOM VIOLENCE
WILL VERY SOON
COME TO AN END.
YOU KNOW WHAT I
SAY IS TRUE.

AND WE NOW HAVE
THE MEANS TO MAKE
IT HAPPEN. I AM
INDESTRUCTIBLE. YOU
ARE EQUIPPED TO
BE MY ANGELS.

AND THERE
IS NO ONE WHO
CAN OPPOSE US WITH
SUCCESS.



THAT'S
NOT TRUE.



YOU ARE SAYING
THAT YOU CAN STOP
ME? YOU ARE RASH
TO SUGGEST THIS.

WILL YOU
SUFFER THE DEATH
OF ERIC, AND MAEL, AND
JESSICA, FOR SUCH
A POINT?



MEN AND WOMEN ARE
LEARNING ANIMALS. THEY
ARE CREATURES EVER CHANGING,
EVER IMPROVING, EVER
EXPANDING THE CAPACITY
OF THEIR HEARTS.

YOU ARE
NOT SEEING THE
EVOLUTION OF THE
HUMAN SOUL!



YOU SPEAK OF
THE INTELLECTUAL
ATTITUDES OF
A FEW.

NO, I SPEAK OF
CHANGING PHILOSOPHY.
MADNESS, AS FLAWED AS THEY
ARE, THEY MUST HAVE THE
TIME TO PERFECT THEIR
OWN DREAMS!



AKASHA, EVEN
IF IT COULD
BE DONE...



...EVEN IF THE MURVIL
POPULATION DID NOT
RISE AGAINST YOU,
AND THE MEN DID NOT
FIND SOME WAY TO
DESTROY YOU LONG
BEFORE SUCH A
PLAN COULD BE
ACCOMPLISHED--



YOU'RE A FOOL,
MAXIMUS, OR YOU
THINK I AM. DON'T
YOU THINK I KNOW
WHAT THIS WORLD
IS CAPABLE OF?



AH, MY QUEEN,
I DON'T THINK YOU
KNOW IT! TRULY,
I DON'T!

I HAVE SEEN
REVOLUTIONS IN
THOUGHT AND
PHILOSOPHY WHICH I
BELIEVED IMPOSSIBLE.
IS NOT THE HUMAN RACE
MOVING TOWARD THE
VERY AGE OF PEACE
YOU DESCRIBE?



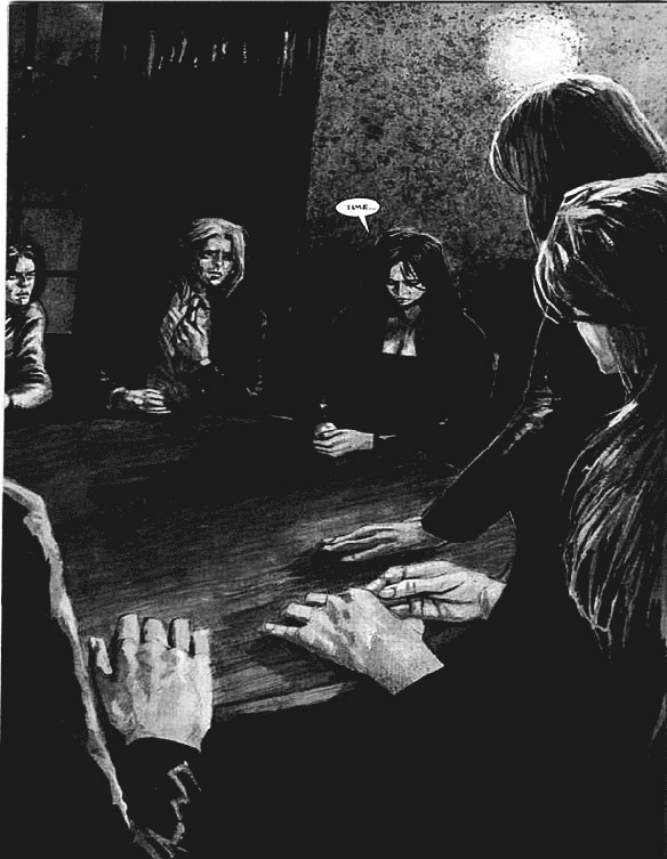
TIME, MAYBE
THAT IS WHAT
WE ARE ASKING FOR.
TIME, AND THAT IS
WHAT YOU HAVE
TO GIVE.



IT'S THEIR WORLD,
NOT OURS. WE HAVE
NO RIGHT NOW TO
INTERRUPT THEIR
STRUGGLE.

YES!
TIME!

YOU HAVE
MEDITATED IN
SILENCE FOR
CENTURIES UPON
YOUR SOLUTIONS.
WHAT IS ANOTHER
HUNDRED
YEARS?



TIME...